

COUNTRY VIEWS THAT MAY RECONCILE YOU TO THE CITY

By L. M. GLACKENS



ANY STICK WILL DO TO BEAT A DOG

By CHARLES S. BROOKS

the man of peace. Observe his sidling gate, his skirts pulled close, his hollowed back, his head bent across his shoulder. Watch him mince his steps, lest a lingering heel be nipped. Listen to him try the foremost dog with names, to gull him to a belief that they have met before in happier circumstances!

You remember the fellow in the play who would have loved war had they not dug villanous saltpetre from the harmless earth. The countryside, too, in my opinion, would be more peaceful of a summer afternoon were it not overrun with dogs. Let me be plain. I myself like dogs—sleepy dogs blinking in the firelight, friendly dogs with wagging tails, young dogs in their first puppyhood with their teeth scarce sprouted, whose jaws have not yet burgeoned into danger, and old dogs, too, who sun themselves and give forth hollow, toothless, reassuring sounds. A dog of vegetarian aspect pleases me. Let him bear a mild eye as though he were nourished on the softer foods! I would wish every dog to have a full complement of tail. It's the sure barometer of his warm regard. There's no art to find the mind's construction in the face. And I would have him with not too much curiosity. It's a quality that brings him too often to the gate. It makes him prone to sniff.

Nor do I like dogs addicted to sudden excitement. Lethargy becomes them better. Let them be without the Gallic graces! In general I like a dog to whom I have been properly introduced, with an exchange of credentials. While the dog is by, let his master address me in softest tones to cement the understanding. At bench shows I love the noble beasts, though I keep to the middle of the aisle. The streets are all the safer when so many of the creatures are kept within.

Frankly, I would enjoy the country

more if I knew that all the dogs were away on visits. Of course highroad is quite safe. Its frequent traffic is its insurance. Then, too, the stable is at such

a distance, it is only a monstrous anger can bring the dog. But maybe you are hot and thirsty, and there is a well at the side of the house. All about there

is an ominous silence. To the practised eye, there is a look of "dog." Or maybe a lane leads down to the river. Even at this distance you hear the shallow brawl of water on the stones. Or a path goes off across a hill, with trees beckoning at the top. Shall we follow the hot pavement, or shall we dare these lonely stretches, where beasts may rise to plague us?

There is a French village near Quebec whose population is chiefly dogs. It lies along the river in a single street, not many miles from the point where Wolf climbed to the Plains of Abraham. There are a hundred houses flat against the roadway, and on the steps of each there sits a dog. As I went through on foot, each of these dogs picked me up, examined me nasally and passed me on, not generously as though I had stood the test, but rather in deep suspicion that I was a queer fellow, not to be penetrated at first, but one who would surely be found out and gobbled before coming to the end of the street. As long as I would eventually furnish the common banquet, it mattered not which dog took the first nip. It would be better to wait until all were gathered about the platter.

"Good neighbor dog," each seemed to say, "do you too sniff upon the rogue! If he be honest, my old nose is much at fault." Meantime, I padded lightly through the village, at first calling on the dogs by English names, but later using such bits as I had of French: "Aucassin, mon pauvre chien. Voici, Tintagiles, alors donc mon cheri," but with little effect.

I am convinced that I am not alone in my—shall I say diffidence?—towards dogs. Indeed, there is evidence from the oldest times that mankind in its more honest moments has confessed to a fear of dogs. In recognition of this general fear the unmuzzled Cerberus was put at the gate of Hades. It was

rightly felt that when the unhappy pilgrims got within the fifty snapping heads were better than a bolt upon the door. He, also, who first spoke the ancient proverb, "Let sleeping dogs lie," did no more than voice the caution of the street.

It was Daniel who sat with the lions. But there are degrees of bravery. On Long Street within sight of my window—just where the street gets into its most tangled traffic—there has hung for many years the painted signboard of a veterinary surgeon. Its artist was in the first flourish of youth. The surgeon's name is set up in modest letters, but the horse below flames with color. What a flaring nostril! What an eager eye! How arched the neck! Here is a wrath and speed unknown to the quadrupeds of this present Long Street. Such mild-eyed, sharp-ribbed horses as now infest the curb, mere whittlings from a larger age, hang their heads at their degeneracy. Indeed, these horses seem to their owners to be not worth the price of a nostrum.

And of a consequence the doctor's work has fallen off. It has become a rare occasion when it is permitted him to stroke his chin in contemplation of some inner palsy. Therefore, to give his wisdom scope, the doctor some time since announced the cellar of the building to be a hospital for dogs. Must I press the analogy? I have seen the doctor with bowl and spoon in hand take leave of the cheerful world. He opens the cellar door. A curdling yelp comes up the stairs. In the abyss below there are ten dogs at least, all of them sick, all dangerous. Not since Orion first led his hunting pack across the heavens has there been so fierce a sound. The door closes. There is a final yelp, such as greets a bone. Doubtless by this time they are munching on the doctor. Good sir, had you lived in pre-apostolic days, your name would have been linked with Daniel's in the hymn. I might have spent my earliest treble in your praise.

By Courtesy of "The New Republic."

THIS DAY IN HISTORY—By Rea Irvin



Grand Reunion of the Original "Florodora" Sextet, July 30, 1910.